

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, September 9, 2013

The Center of Clayton – Multipurpose Room C

Members present: Ira Berkowitz, Brad Bernstein, Laurel Harrington, Jeanne Most, Eric Schneider & Melanie Tamsky

Absent: Michelle Harris, Darryl Higuchi, Mark Stapleton & Mark Winings

Also Present: Patty DeForrest, Toni Siering & Denise Ucinski.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from the July meeting were approved as written.

Addresses from the Audience: There were no addresses from the audience.

Opening Statements: Mr. Berkowitz, new chairman, welcomed Ms. Jeanne Most to the Commission. Ms. Most provided the following information about herself: she has two children who grew up in Clayton, she has been active in programs, is a big advocate of green space, enjoys the aesthetic part of parks and is very excited to be part of Commission during the enhancement of Clayton.

Mr. Berkowitz stated that many issues have been addressed while he has been serving on the Commission, many productive things have taken place and he worked with Ms. DeForrest on the Ice Rink task force. He also mentioned that the Park and Recreation Department has an awesome amount to be proud of because the department has accomplished a great number of projects, Ms. DeForrest and her staff have gone above and beyond, and Ms. DeForrest's leadership has been exceptional.

Ms. DeForrest announced Ms. Siering's promotion to Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation.

Municipal Park Grant: Ms. DeForrest explained that last year the Parks and Recreation Department applied for a grant to assist with funding the Oak Knoll Playground project; the department did not get the grant, missing it by one point. The department is interested in applying for the St. Louis County Municipal Grant again this year. This year, a city our size is eligible for up to \$240,000. The total cost of the playground project is \$280,000; the city will be applying for \$150,000. The Clayton Early Childhood Center has already agreed to pay for a portion of the playground.

Ms. DeForrest stated that some changes will be made to the Oak Knoll Park Playground design since last year. A fence has already been installed around the existing playground and will be reused for the new playground. The current playground is nineteen years old, no longer ADA accessible, is the most out of date in comparison to the other City playgrounds and it is next on the list to be replaced. The project also moves up on the Master Plan priority project list because an outside entity is willing to pay for half of the project cost.

After discussing the importance of installing a new playground in Oak Knoll Park, Mr. Berkowitz made a motion stating that the Parks and Recreation Department should apply for the St. Louis County Municipal Grant for the Oak Knoll Playground. Mr. Schneider moved the motion, Ms. Harrington seconded it and all voted in favor.

Director's Report

Shaw Park Master Plan Overlay: Ms. DeForrest stated SWT is nearing completion of the Shaw Park Master Plan Overlay; it will be presented to the BOA at their September 24 meeting. Their boards were displayed at the James Surls Dedication event on Friday, August 30. Changes were made to the overlay based on public comments from the community. The streams running through the parks were left in the drawings for future discussion. The primary areas of focus will be the North Hill, the

Century Garden and the Shaw Park Ice Rink. The next steps are to conduct a feasibility study for purposes of fundraising. This study is conducted to find out if the projects can be funded, plan how they will be completed and to develop an action plan for fundraising.

Jacobs is also finalizing the Shaw Park Ice Rink rendering. A brief background will be included with the rendering and will include justification for the new rink, reasons for selecting the proposed design, the next steps and how the phases of the project will be incorporated. Jacobs will be presenting at the September BOA meeting in conjunction with SWT.

Shaw Park: The Shaw Park Recreational Trail is nearing completion. Staff is in the process of cleaning up the area around the trail and working on landscaping. The garden at the north end will be planted once the heat breaks. Staff is working hard to make sure the park looks great for the Centennial Festival on October 5th. .

The Arbor Day trees will be planted in the fall. Over the next couple of years the plan is to replace trees with donations through CCF Parks being promoted in the upcoming City Views. This year more park benches were donated than trees.

The Enterprise Holdings Pavilion construction is underway; however it will not be ready for the Centennial Festival. A manhole cover was discovered when digging began that no one knew about, causing some delays. The pavilion will look very nice when it is finished.

Dog Park: The dog park opened on August 30. One hundred and twenty-eight dogs have a membership to date. The cost for one dog is eighty dollars and additional dogs are sixty dollars each. A new tag is required every year. The Anderson Park sign work should begin the week of September 2. The rain garden created by park staff is helping to handle the water issues at the site.

Tennis Center: Ms. DeForrest informed the Commission about an ongoing issue with the fence at the Tennis Center; the fence is not strong enough and was not the fence agreed upon in the contract. A new fence will be installed this fall, after the CHS tennis season is complete.

The tennis center is having a great season. Frontenac Racquet Club has done an excellent job overall. Total revenue to date was \$89,000 which is the highest it has ever been; last year total revenue was \$74,000. Their program offerings are great; the community likes the quality of programs and the expertise of their pros. Over one hundred and forty Clayton residents were members of Frontenac before the City contracted services with the club. This connection seems to have reinvigorated the Tennis Center. Staff intends to recommend that the contract be renewed for an additional year.

Park Projects: The final park project being completed this year is the renovation of Shaw Park Fields #3 and #4. These fields are currently not irrigated. Sod needs to be replaced as well. The bid document should be available by the week of September 16 with the goal of construction by mid-December.

Events: The Clayton Centennial Festival will be held on Saturday, October 5. Ms. DeForrest said the hope is to have a good number of community members in attendance. It is a big birthday party for the City. The event will be family oriented and Clayton vendors are proving the food that will be available for purchase.

The Shaw Park Aquatic Center lap swim hours were extended with the assistance of staffing from The Heights. Swimmers are talking about the possibility of covering the pool; some of these swimmers will be in attendance at the October Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

Taylor Park residents are interested in funding enhancements at the park and are considering private donations to help pay for this. The intent would be to hold a public meeting to discuss improving, not changing, the park.

This year, the main program change with youth sports leagues was that team registrations were accepted. Improvements will be made to the registration process and an end of year survey will be conducted before basketball season starts. This year there was more participants in our youth soccer leagues than last year.

Old Business / New Business: The Surls dedication event went very well and installation of the art piece went smoothly. Mr. Surls went to Clayton High School to speak with students who also watched the installation.

Mr. Berkowitz mentioned that Commission member should email Ms. DeForrest if they would like an agenda item to be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Bernstein stated that the school district has received offers for Maryland School, they are evaluating bids and offers, but the BOE has not made or come up with a consensus about a decision. The BOA sent an official response in regards to obtaining the Maryland School property; it stated that the City is not in the financial place to make an offer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

Respectfully Submitted By: Denise Ucinski